



Research Digest

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The RRN Research Digest provides a synopsis of recent research on refugee and forced migration issues from entities associated with the RRN and others.

NEW RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

Carrera, S., & Colombi, D. (2025). [Irregularising human mobility: EU migration policies and the European Commission's role](#). Springer. Open access book. What is the history and current state of play of EU law and policy covering irregularised human mobility? What has been the role and contributions of the 2019-2024 European Commission as regards EU migration policy? This book investigates how migration policies have been problematised at the EU institutional level, in particular by the European Commission. It critically assesses the assumptions lying behind the Commission's political priorities, agendas and policy outputs. Through the concept of irregularity assemblages, the book examines how EU policy professionals and bureaucracies in the relevant Commission services problematise their respective mandates/portfolios; how they interact with each other and even compete; and how they frame certain forms of human mobility as being an 'irregular migration problem' or not. After retracing key historical developments in the framing of irregularised human mobilities at the EU level, the book identifies six policy approaches in the work and structures of the 2019-2024 European Commission. It finds that a home affairs and criminalisation approach that prioritises a law enforcement understanding of cross-border and intra-EU mobility, and pursuing a Ministry of Interior-like agenda, has prevailed. This approach stands at odds with human dignity and other legitimate public policy approaches, such as those giving priority to employment and social inclusion, non-discrimination, and fundamental rights, where the administrative migration status of the individual is not the entry point. The overriding priority driving EU migration policy has been the expulsion, policing and criminalisation of people framed or categorised as 'irregular migrants'. The analysis shows how Commission has failed to effectively perform its role as guardian of the Treaties and unequivocally enforce and comply with EU Treaty constitutive values, EU law and Better Regulation commitments in migration policies.

Dauvergne, C. (2025). [Towards a theoretical account of the refugee in international law](#). *International Journal of Refugee Law*, 37(2), 151–174. Open access. The ambition of this work is to describe what it would mean to interject the concept of the refugee into theoretical accounts of international law and to argue that this undertaking is overdue and increasingly necessary. The starting point is the twinned observations that the refugee is almost entirely absent from international legal theory, and that refugee law scholarship has rarely engaged with the dominant narratives of international legal theory. Despite being a creature of the law, the refugee is more theoretically anchored in accounts of international relations than in theoretical accounts of the law. The article begins outside legal theory, with Arendt and Haddad, arguing that work in international relations theory provides insight into how and why this inquiry is worthwhile. It then traces where refugee law scholarship has encountered theoretical accounts of international law, as well as some leading accounts where the figure of the refugee is notably absent. The article considers how a deeper engagement with the refugee informs our understandings of sovereignty, humanitarianism, and the nature of obligation in international law. It closes by advocating for a larger project of theorizing the refugee within international law.

Hyeon, Y. (2025). [Fake refugee? Yemeni refugees becoming faceless labour in South Korea](#). *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 1–21. Open access. The arrival of 561 Yemenis fleeing from Yemen civil war on Jeju Island in 2018 has rendered the refugee issue visible in South Korea. The unexpected influx provoked intense backlashes, stigmatising them as ‘Gajja Nanmin (fake refugee in Korean)’. Aligned with critical refugee scholarship, this article challenges the long-standing refugee/migrant binary, exploring the layered and often overlooked experiences of Yemeni refugees in South Korea. Their lived experiences reveal a paradox where the state is the one who disrupts the refugee/migrant binary framework, effectively regulating Yemenis with humanitarian sojourner status categorisation, following its developmental migration policymaking trajectory. As the first longitudinal research on Yemenis, this article highlights a refugee reception experience beyond the dichotomy of the Global North and Global South, offering an opportunity to transcend multiple binaries that structure the complex terrain of migration.

Jean-Pierre, J., Brisbane, M., Hassan, S., Bailey, J., & Barrie, H. (2025). [The influence of Transnational Cultural Capital on Black Immigrant and Refugee Youth Perspectives of School Discipline](#). *Migrant Children and Youth*, 103–123. Open access. Studies that focus on youth’s perspectives of school discipline seldomly highlight immigrant and refugee youth’s viewpoints. Meanwhile, the influence of newcomer parents’ cultural capital is often assessed to investigate social mobility while their children’s pre-migration cultural capital remains largely understudied. Drawing from Bourdieu’s social reproduction theory, this study illustrates how transnational cultural capital affects Black newcomer high school students’ perspectives of school discipline. The authors found consistent with prior Canadian studies that the participants reported concerns regarding bias, anti-Black racism, and the lack of fairness of school discipline interventions. Yet, their views also diverged since they perceived that everyday civility and behavioral expectations in the classroom were lenient when compared with their country-of-origin education systems. These findings reveal the

significance of examining newcomer youth's transnational cultural capital and not only parental cultural capital. The conclusions also point to the relevance of investigating transnational cultural capital in aspects of education other than academic achievement and social mobility. This study also reveals the importance of considering the intersectionality of the migration status and racial identity of French-speaking and English-speaking Black newcomer youth when we analyze their school experiences.

Rosvall, P. Å., Öhrn, E., Beach, D., Johansson, M., & Rönnlund, M. (2025). [Educational stakeholders' perspectives on educational transitions and future careers for young refugees in rural areas undergoing depopulation](#). *Intercultural Education*, 1–14. Open access. There are high hopes that young refugees will help to counter population decline in Sweden's rural areas. However, there is a need to better understand the factors and processes that facilitate or hinder their persistent integration and continued presence (including further education and work preparation). This article explores the prevailing refugee reception practices and their consequences during and after the major refugee wave in Sweden that started in 2015. This wave, caused by wars in Syria and Afghanistan, had a huge impact in Sweden's rural areas. The findings illuminate these groups' understandings of requirements for effective, fruitful reception of young refugees, and how their reception can be organised to improve their preparation for further education and work. The results also reveal notable differences between rural areas (e.g. between smaller and larger rural municipalities), and suggest that young refugees' prospects and likelihood of remaining in such areas can be enhanced by measures including incorporating multicultural and intercultural perspectives in staff training, and organisational adjustments to enhance local career learning and interculturalism.

REPORTS AND POLICY BRIEFS

[Climate Change and Migration](#). (2025). Reliefweb. This report examines the links between climate change and migration, showing how environmental stressors drive human mobility. Produced by Cairo University's Migration Research Unit in partnership with IOM, the study draws on case studies from Bangladesh, Mexico and Morocco, with special emphasis on Egypt as a highly vulnerable lower-middle-income country. It situates climate-induced migration within broader social, economic and political contexts, analysing both rapid- and slow-onset events and their differentiated impacts on vulnerable populations. Offering fresh insights and lessons, this report speaks to policymakers, researchers and practitioners confronting one of today's most pressing global challenges.

[Experiences and challenges faced by migrant women affected by immigration detention](#). (2025). UN Women. Immigration detention is a punitive practice that deprives migrants of liberty and exposes women to profound risks. This policy brief examines how detention systems—marked by overcrowding, abuse, and a lack of healthcare—harm migrant women and gender-diverse people, compounding trauma and violating their human rights. It documents sexual and gender-based violence, denial of reproductive health care, and

inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities, all of which erode dignity and well-being. Through a feminist, intersectional lens, this policy brief highlights how structural discrimination and restrictive migration policies magnify these harms. It calls attention to the urgent need for non-custodial, community-based alternatives to detention that protect rights, provide access to services, and enable migrants to live with dignity while their cases are resolved.

[From Displacement to Resilience: Aid, Economic Recovery, and Social Cohesion in Post-War Iraq. \(2025\). Reliefweb.](#) Large-scale displacement and return can disrupt the economic and social fabric of communities, leading to intergroup tensions and increased competition over resources. Iraq has experienced high levels of displacement caused by the 2014 conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL). This baseline report is the first in a series of publications that will be produced as part of a randomized controlled trial to evaluate the impact of the ILA program in the governorates of Anbar, Diyala, Salah Al-Din, and Ninewa. Based on over 6,000 survey interviews, this report describes baseline economic conditions and social cohesion among people targeted by the ILA program and the surrounding communities, providing evidence of a robust correlation between economic vulnerability and different dimensions of social cohesion. Based on these findings, the report provides evidence-based guidance for policymakers and practitioners supporting local recovery efforts in Iraq and similar post-conflict settings.

[Policy Brief: Chaotic Policy Changes Are Ending Access to Asylum in America. \(2025\). AILA.](#) The Trump Administration's numerous asylum policy changes over the past year have made it harder for individuals to access lifesaving protections. This brief overviews the consequences of these policy changes and possible reforms to make the asylum system more fair, accurate, and humane.

[Promising Practices and Peer Learning: Alternatives to Immigration Detention in the Asia-Pacific within the Framework of the GCM and GCR. \(2025\). International Detention Coalition.](#) This report is based on a hybrid event hosted within the auspices of the Second Asia-Pacific Regional Review of Implementation of the GCM. The report covers highlighted issues concerning the rights and welfare of migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless populations in the Asia-Pacific region.

NEWS AND BLOG POSTS

[Communalized Human Rights Amid Growing Internal Displacement in the Arab World by Manoug Antaby, October 3, 2025. Researching Internal Displacement.](#) The Arab region has faced decades of wars, uprisings, and disasters, displacing millions and straining fragile protection systems. While humanitarian actors often step in during crises, human rights organizations have struggled to play an effective role in safeguarding IDPs. This article examines these institutional shortcomings and proposes a more context-sensitive, community-based approach to protecting IDPs' rights beyond emergency relief. Ultimately,

the author argues for foregrounding a ‘communalised human rights approach’ to displacement, one that integrates the strong Arab cultural traditions of kinship, communal solidarity and mutual aid into protections for displaced people.

How America's Retreat from Refugee Protection Undermines Global Stability by John Slocum, October 16, 2025. **The Chicago Council on Global Affairs.** The Trump administration is dismantling the United States Refugee Admissions Program and lobbying other countries to weaken protections for at-risk refugees and asylum seekers. The stakes for millions of refugees in need of resettlement are high. The administration’s actions threaten not only them, but the fundamental principles underlying the global refugee protection system.

Refugees in Ethiopia Face Rising Hunger as WFP Forced to Reduced Rations, October 13, 2025. **World Food Program USA.** The World Food Programme (WFP) warned that refugees in Ethiopia are at risk of rising hunger as critical funding shortages force cuts to food rations. In October, WFP was forced to reduce rations for 780,000 refugees in 27 camps across Ethiopia from a 60% ration to just 40%. This means each person will now receive food assistance equivalent to less than 1,000 calories per day. Only 70,000 newly arrived refugees who fled conflict in neighboring Sudan and South Sudan will continue to receive full rations for the next six months. Hunger and malnutrition rates are very high among the new refugees.

Sudan’s displaced are in homes, not just camps – and aid keeps missing them by Greeballah Mohamed, October 15, 2025. **The New Humanitarian.** The conflict in Sudan (fought primarily between the national army and the paramilitary-turned-rebel Rapid Support Forces) has created the largest internal displacement crisis in the world, with nearly 12 million people forced to flee their homes. Yet one of the most important facts about this crisis – one the international aid system has struggled to grasp – is that it is not solely a crisis of camps. The data confirms what anyone on the ground can see. An estimated two-thirds of Sudan’s displaced people are living within host communities – absorbed into the homes of relatives, friends, and even strangers. This isn’t a small detail; it is a paradigm-shifting reality that makes the traditional, logistics-heavy aid model redundant – yet the system has struggled to adapt.

Who will take 30,000 asylum seekers? EU's talks hit early roadblock, October 16, 2025. **China Daily.** The EU's new migration pact is headed for its first major test, with member states facing a Christmas deadline to agree on the relocation of at least 30,000 asylum seekers — and so far, no country has stepped forward. Interior ministers from the EU's 27 nations met on Tuesday in Luxembourg to begin talks on the so-called "solidarity mechanism", a key pillar of the migration reform adopted last year and set to fully enter into force in 2026. The pact aims to ease pressure on frontline countries such as Greece and Italy by requiring other member states to either take in asylum seekers or pay 20,000 euros (\$23,400) per person to help alleviate the strain. But the plan has already hit resistance from member states. (China Daily is a Chinese Communist Party-owned newspaper).

EVENTS, RESOURCES, DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Book Launch: Hearts of Freedom. McGill-Queen's University Press. This book is about the first-hand accounts of Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Laotian refugees who settled in Canada, contributing to the well-being and strength of their country. This event will be on Nov 2, 2025, Burnhamthorpe Library, Mississauga, Canada, from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM ET.

Forced Migration Research Archive. Forced Migration Current Awareness Blog. With last week being 2025's Open Access Week, the Forced Migration Research Archive is a subject-focused repository hosted by YorkSpace at Canada's York University. It was established to provide authors a free and easy way to make their research openly accessible. FMRA welcomes the following items, in English, French or Spanish: postprints/accepted manuscripts of journal articles and book chapters (green open access); open access articles published in diamond/gold and hybrid journals; open access books and book chapters; theses and dissertations; and certain forms of grey literature such as research reports, policy briefs and working papers.

Penalties Against Women Seeking (International) Protection. WIRL. This will be the fifth in a series of free online seminars hosted by the Women in Refugee Law (WiRL) network on the theme of "Refuge in a cold climate: the impact on women". These are public events, ideal for anyone whose work relates to refugee or asylum-claiming women or with an interest in the needs and experiences of refugee women. This series draws on WiRL's global membership to apply a gendered lens in analysing the impact of increasing hostility to refugees in different states and contexts. Speakers for this event will be Natasha Yacoub, Paula Banerjee, and Catherine Briddick. The online event will be on November 6th, 2025, 9:00 AM (GMT/UTC).

Seminar: Refugee Pathways to Freedom and Peace. Centre for Refugee Studies. Janet Billson will present on two recent publications: 1) *Refugee Pathways to Freedom: Escaping Persecution and Statelessness*, London: Bloomsbury, 2024. Individual and focus group interviews with Russian Doukhobors, Rohingya, Nepali-speaking Bhutanese (Lhotshampa), and Kurds. Focus on the marginalizing impacts of refugee status, flight, refugee camps, and Canada-U.S. resettlement policies. 2) *Refugee Pathways to Peace: Escaping the Chaos of War*, London: Bloomsbury, 2025. Individual and focus group interviews with Syrian, DR Congolese, Liberian, Ukrainian, and Vietnamese refugees. Focus on refugee integration and resettlement policies, and the future of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and relevant global frameworks. This is an online event that will be on November 4, 2025, 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM ET.

WEBINAR: "Displacement due to Environmental Factors: Lessons from Latin America". Internal Displacement Research Programme, Refugee Law Initiative. Latin America is often seen as a region that exemplifies how environmental factors - such as environmental degradation and exploitation, resource scarcity and competition, and disasters

– can force people to flee their homes. But the legal and policy challenges posed by the vastly greater numbers of people forced to displace within their own countries as a result of these environmental factors are all too often overlooked. This webinar, addressing that major gap, discusses new research on how Latin American societies have addressed these underexplored challenges: Professor Andrea Pacheco Pacifico, presenting on Brazil, starts by arguing that such displacement is less “natural” than the result of inadequate responses to environmental risks, failures in governance, and structural inequalities, Dr Beatriz Eugenia Sánchez-Mojica, speaking to Colombia, considers how these experiences intersect with dynamics of internal armed conflict and what this means for reorienting existing policy for people displaced by the conflict, and Dr Patrícia Nabuco Martuscelli takes a different intersectional approach, asking how displacement driven by environmental factors overlaps with other factors promoting vulnerability, such as being a child or member of a minority group. This webinar will be on November 6th, 2025, 1-2 pm BST UK.